

## **Competing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Case for Comprehensive Investments in Education and the Cost of Inaction**

Governor Patrick is calling for a renewed investment in education in order to create opportunity across the Commonwealth and to keep the Massachusetts economy growing. The Governor's plan includes a \$550 million investment in education, reaching \$1 billion over four years, to provide universal access to high quality early education for children across the state, from birth through age five; fully fund K-12 education and allow for extended school days in high-need schools; make college more affordable and accessible for high school graduates; and allow community colleges to expand their efforts to provide students with the knowledge and skill training needed to succeed in the workplace.

The Commonwealth's Innovation Economy relies on a high-knowledge, well-skilled workforce, and in order for Massachusetts to remain competitive in the 21st century global economy, our commitment to excellence and opportunity for all of our students must start earlier, run deeper, and be sustained longer.

We have the strategies in place to build a 21<sup>st</sup> century public education system that meets every child where she is and gives her the supports she needs to succeed in the classroom, the workplace and in life. These investments are critical to accelerating our growth and ensuring that all students, not just some, have access to opportunity.

The Governor's proposal will invest:

- Nearly **\$350 million** (\$131 million in FY14) in our early education and care system to:
  - Eliminate the Department of Early Education and Care's (EEC) waitlist, currently at 30,000 children birth – age five, by providing universal access to high quality early education for all infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers in Massachusetts;
  - Expand initiatives to ensure the highest educational quality among early education providers; and
  - Increase educational programs and supports for parents and family members to further engage them in their child's success.
  - Incentivize more school districts to offer pre-school to their 4-year olds through dedicated new Chapter 70 funding.
- **\$70 million** (\$5 million in FY14) in a targeted expanded learning time initiative for middle school students in high-need schools to ensure that schools have the additional time and resources they need to build differentiated systems of learning, and that students have access to enrichment programs that will enhance their ability to succeed both in and out of the classroom.
- **\$20 million** in funding for comprehensive supports to students and their families in Gateway Cities.
- **\$226 million** increase in Chapter 70 local aid which will hold every district harmless for aid; keep every district at foundation levels of spending; finish the Chapter 70 equity reforms of 2007; guarantee an increase of \$25 per pupil for every district; and increase the assumed cost of the average out-of-district special education placement for school districts.

- **\$274 million** (\$152 million in FY14) in the MassGrant program, the Completion Incentive Grant Fund, and additional funding to our public institutions of higher education to make college more affordable and accessible, particularly for lower- and middle-income students, and ties campus funding to performance and outcomes in order to ensure taxpayer dollars are efficiently being spent.

The implications of allowing even one young person to remain stuck in the achievement gap or be limited in their education attainment by soaring costs in higher education go far beyond the harm to that individual student; there are also significant economic implications for local communities and our state as a whole. The Commonwealth's ability to attract and retain employers is inextricably linked to the success of every worker – and the success of every student. No one is expendable. When we shortchange children, we endanger our state's economic competitiveness and quality of life. In order to sustain our knowledge-based economy, we must retain talent and ensure that all of our students have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

"We know from academic research, from years of public policy and from our own experience as parents that investing in our children, starting at a young age, pays huge dividends for them and for our community as a whole. To those who say we cannot afford this, I challenge you to show me which 4-year old you think we should not invest in."

- Governor Deval Patrick